

VZCZCXRO0131

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DE RUCNDT #0355 1080045
ZNR UUUUU ZZH
P 170045Z APR 08
FM USMISSION USUN NEW YORK
TO RUEHC/SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 4124
INFO RUEHZL/EUROPEAN POLITICAL COLLECTIVE PRIORITY
RUEHGG/UN SECURITY COUNCIL COLLECTIVE PRIORITY
RUEHAK/AMEMBASSY ANKARA PRIORITY 1596
RUEHTH/AMEMBASSY ATHENS PRIORITY 1509
RUEHNC/AMEMBASSY NICOSIA PRIORITY 1147

UNCLAS USUN NEW YORK 000355

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E.O. 12958: N/A

TAGS: PREL UNSC CY

SUBJECT: PASCOE DELIVERS CAUTIOUSLY OPTIMISTIC MESSAGE ON CYPRUS TO UNSC

REF: USUN 00282

¶1. (SBU) Summary: On April 15, UN Under Secretary General for Political Affairs Pascoe briefed the Security Council on his March 30 to April 2 assessment mission to Cyprus. Pascoe said that both parties had expressed willingness to reach a comprehensive settlement and engage in good faith with their counterparts. He said he was struck by the positive rapport between Cypriot President Christofias and Turkish Cypriot leader Talat despite the international isolation of the north. Following up on his message to the P-5 in late March (reftel), Pascoe concluded that the two sides are trying hard to make the working groups and technical committees successful. If they achieve this, he is confident that the Secretary-General will decide to appoint another high-level

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Special Envoy by the end of the three-month preparatory period agreed by the two leaders on March 21. The UK Permrep said his mission will circulate a draft Security Council Presidential Statement (PRST) soon to encourage further progress. All Security Council members supported the idea of adopting a PRST this week. End Summary.

¶2. (SBU) On April 15, U/SYG Pascoe briefed the Security Council on his recent assessment mission to Cyprus. Pascoe told the UNSC that the successful March 21 meeting between Christofias and Talat had been a concrete expression of the new positive atmosphere on the island. He stated that the leaders had avoided thorny issues by mentioning neither the July 8, 2006 Agreement nor the Comprehensive Settlement Plan in their March 21 statement. Pascoe said that while he was on the island March 30 to April 2, both parties had expressed a willingness to reach a comprehensive settlement and engage in good faith with their counterparts. He was struck by the positive rapport between Christofias and Talat that existed despite the international isolation of the north. Pascoe reported that during his follow-on trips to Athens and Ankara, Greece had welcomed the March 21 Agreement as an opportunity to move forward while Ankara had stressed the importance of improved economic and social conditions for the Turkish Cypriots. Pascoe noted that there has already been further progress since March 21, including the April 3 opening of Ledra Street crossing. Pascoe expected the working groups and technical committees envisioned in the July 8, 2006 Agreement to be launched by the end of this week.

¶3. (SBU) Pascoe stated that the two sides will seek to bridge as many issues as they can at the working level in the coming days, and leave the remaining issues for the next meeting of the two leaders. He expressed optimism that much can be

accomplished in the preparatory phase beforehand, adding that the sides will "draw on a considerable body of existing work" in their search for a settlement. Pascoe warned however that there should be no illusions that issues that have complicated a settlement for years will be quickly solved; he pointed to the opening of Ledra Street crossing followed by its temporary re-closure as a metaphor for difficult patterns the settlement process may experience. Following up on his message to the P-5 in late March, Pascoe concluded that the two sides are working hard to make the working groups and technical committees successful and that if they achieve this he is confident that after 90 days the Secretary-General will decide to appoint another high-level Special Envoy.

¶4. (SBU) Echoing Pascoe's message, UK Permrep Sawers said the current atmosphere allows for optimism but that the issues on Cyprus have not gotten easier. Sawers stated that because Security Council support for efforts on the island is important, the UK would circulate a draft Presidential Statement (PRST) to members soon. USUN voiced agreement with Pascoe's cautious optimism regarding what has been accomplished and expressed support for a PRST.

¶5. (SBU) French Permrep Ripert was hopeful regarding the new spirit of cooperation on the island but underscored the end objective must be reunification. Russian Deputy Permrep Dolgov stated support for continuing to seek a solution to the Cyprus problem through the UN and continuation of the Secretary-General's Good Offices Mission. Dolgov said the

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March 21 meeting was important because it helped implementation of the July 8 process. All Council members expressed support for a PRST to encourage further progress.

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